

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4, 6 and 8-10 are amended and claim 3 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter found therein. No new matter is added.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicates that claims 3 and 4 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims, as well as correcting minor informalities discussed below. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of canceled claim 3. Thus, claim 1 is allowable. Further, claims 6-10 are not rejected, and are only objected to because of informalities, also discussed below.

II. Objection to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(b), although it is unclear which of the Drawings is objected to. During a telephone call, Examiner Goldberg indicated that the objection is to Fig. 3 for allegedly not showing how Fig. 3 is related to Fig. 1. However, a structure linking Fig. 1 and Fig. 3 is the head unit 21 in Fig. 1 and the discharging head 34 in Fig. 3, shown together in Fig. 4. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

III. Objection to Claims 1-10

The Office Action objects to claims 1-10 because of informalities in claims 1, 3, 6 and 8. The objection to canceled claim 3 is moot. Claims 1, 6 and 8 are amended responsive to the objection. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

IV. The Claims are Patentable

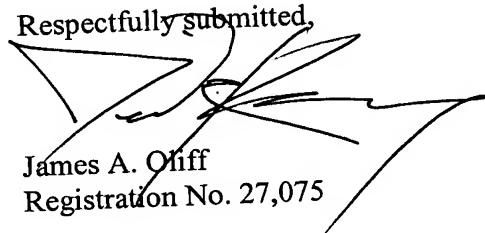
The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Fujii et al. (Fujii), U.S. Patent No. 6,371,598; and rejects claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujii in

view of Hotomi et al. (Hotomi), U.S. Patent No. 6,336,715. The rejections are moot in view of the amendment to claim 1.

V. **Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2 and 4-10 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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